

# Ayakulik River

## Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge

The Ayakulik River is one of Kodiak Island's two popular remote Chinook salmon sport fisheries. In recent years the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (responsible for managing the sport fishery) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (responsible for managing Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge) have heard public concerns over visitor satisfaction during this fishery, which have included issues such as prime fishing holes being monopolized by visitor camps, large groups staying for extended periods of time, garbage being left or buried along the river, and general overcrowding.

In response to these concerns, during 2003 and 2004 both agencies, along the local Fish and Game Advisory Committee and other stakeholders, conducted a public process to determine what type of fishing experience visitors wanted and how these preferences could be accommodated. As a part of this process the advisory committee appointed a stakeholder group charged with developing recommendations for implementation of a future management policy reflecting the interests of users. In order to survey visitor preferences and opinions and also document current visitation levels, during both years the agencies initiated a visitor census which was conducted between June 1 and July 7. Also during this time, the Fish and Wildlife Service established a series of voluntary camping closure zones to alleviate congestion around 7 popular fishing sites, including 2 areas frequented by brown bears.

Results of the two year census indicated that presently overall visitor satisfaction during the fishery is high and that continuation of the voluntary camp closures is paramount to maintaining a high visitor satisfaction level.

At this time the stakeholder workgroup remains active to periodically review updated information on social aspects of the fishery collected by the agencies, and during the future will consider any recommendations for regulating certain aspects of visitor use.

**As you leave the fishery this year, you may be asked to rate your experience in terms of your satisfaction level vs. pre-trip expectations. You will also have the opportunity to provide your ideas on future management policy. What you and other visitors say will be summarized and presented to the work group, which will use the summary as the basis for their recommendations.**

To maintain visitor satisfaction levels, the agencies and work group agreed on the following measures for the 2006 fishery season:

- 1.) **Voluntary camping closures** around 7 popular fishing holes, including 2 areas frequented by brown bears are mapped on the reverse side of this brochure. Area closures will be posted at the up- and down-stream limits.  
  
Also shown is the ADF&G weir, which has a boat gate for passage, and a marked 17b easement which allows camping, loading, and unloading (limited to a 24-hour stay) near the mouth of the river.  
  
Aircraft pickups in the lagoon are made from this spot when conditions allow. Conditions are poor this year.
- 2.) During the peak of the king salmon fishery, June 1 – June 30, ADF&G and Kodiak Refuge recommend keeping your group size to 6 or fewer and your stay to 7 days or less.
- 3.) A survey of visitors exiting the fishery at Ayakulik Lagoon will be conducted by ADF&G to evaluate satisfaction levels and provide an opportunity for input on implementation of any future management measures.

### Visitor Guidelines:

- 1.) **Disturbance of archaeological and historical sites is prohibited (16 USC 470aa) and is punishable by fines up to \$100,000 and a year in jail.**
- 2.) **Monopolizing fishing areas is discouraged.**
- 3.) **Discharge of firearms is valid only for hunting or for defense of life or property. State of Alaska defense of life or property provisions (5AAC 92.410) must be followed when dealing with nuisance or threatening bears.**

- 4.) **All camping and fishing sites must be maintained in a neat and sanitary manner.**

## Pack It In – Pack It Out!

- 1.) All items transported to the Ayakulik River must be removed when you leave, including equipment, food and all garbage (burying garbage is prohibited). Leaving your trash behind is considered littering and you will be cited.  
Trash burning is allowed, but not recommended. The wet climate and lack of firewood make burning incomplete. Pick through the ashes for unburned metals, foil and plastic then pack these out on the plane.
- 2.) Toilet paper is trash too. Pack it out or burn it when not using latrines. When at Bare Creek, use latrines provided by Kodiak Refuge.
- 3.) Store food and garbage in bear proof containers available from ~~the~~ Kodiak Refuge on a first come first serve basis.
- 4.) Dispose of fish offal in the river in riffles, at the downstream end of pools and away from camps.
- 5.) Electric fences to protect food and personal property are helpful in deterring bears and foxes.
- 6.) To avoid bear problems or unintentional waste, we recommend you not retain fish until the last day of your departure. Never stake a live or cleaned fish in the river by your camp.

**For sportfishing and hunting regulations and the brochure “Bear Facts,” please contact:**

Alaska Department of Fish and Game  
211 Mission Road, Kodiak, Alaska, 99615  
tel. 907-486-1880  
Email: doris\_mesnch@fishgame.state.ak.us

**For Refuge information and “Leave No Trace” brochures, please contact:**

Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge  
1390 Buskin River Road, Kodiak, Alaska, 99615  
907-487-2600 (toll free, 888-408-3514)  
Email: Lecita\_Monzon@fws.gov

# Lower Ayakulik River Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge & Vicinity

Refuge Boundary

Private Land

Fishing Hole

Electric Fence - temporary food & garbage storage

**Voluntary Camping Closures**

Bear concentration area

Fishing hole



0 0.5 1 1.5 2 2.5 Miles

